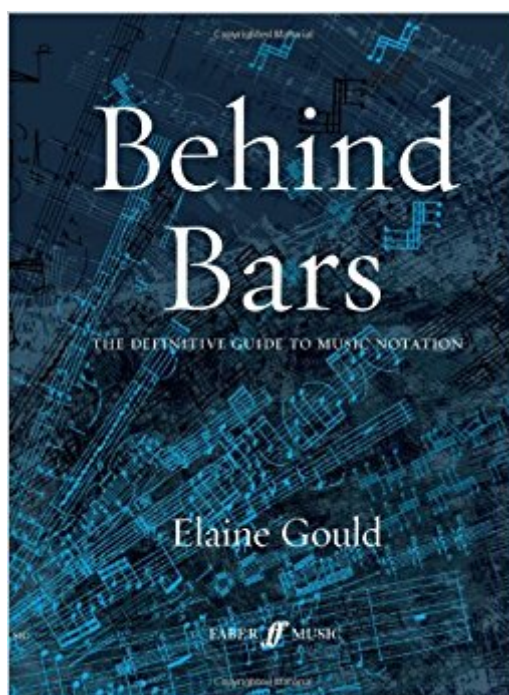


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# Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide To Music Notation (Faber Edition)



## Synopsis

Behind Bars is the indispensable reference book for composers, arrangers, teachers and students of composition, editors, and music processors. In the most thorough and painstakingly researched book to be published since the 1980s, specialist music editor Elaine Gould provides a comprehensive grounding in notational principles. Behind Bars covers everything from basic rules, conventions and themes to complex instrumental techniques, empowering the reader to prepare music with total clarity and precision. With the advent of computer technology, it has never been more important for musicians to have ready access to principles of best practice in this dynamic field, and this book will support the endeavors of software users and devotees of hand-copying alike. The author's understanding of, and passion for, her subject has resulted in a book that is not only practical but also compellingly readable. This seminal and all-encompassing guide encourages new standards of excellence and accuracy and, at a weighty 704 pages, it is supported by 1,500 music examples of published scores from Bach to Xenakis. Chapters include: Section I - General \* Conventions: Ground Rules \* Chords -- Dotted notes -- Ties \* Accidentals and Key Signatures \* Dynamics and Articulation \* Grace Notes, Arpeggiated Chords, Trills, Glissandos and Vibrato \* Metre \* Tuplets \* Repeat Signs. Section II - Idiomatic Notation: Woodwind and Brass \* Percussion \* Keyboard \* Harp \* Classical Guitar \* Strings \* Vocal Music. Section III - Layout and Presentation: Preparing Materials \* Score Layout \* Part Preparation \* Electroacoustic Music \* Freedom and Choice.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"I pray that [this book] becomes a kind of Holy Writ for notation in this coming century. Certainly nobody could have done it better, and it will be a reference for musicians for decades to come." Not my words, but those of Simon Rattle (one of only two conductors to escape censure from Peter Maxwell Davies earlier this week; only Rattle and Pierre Boulez emerged unscathed as "masters of their art" in his recent pop at the profession) on Elaine Gould's new book, *Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*. This "wonderful monster volume" - Rattle again - is indeed more than the sum of its parts. Gould's book is the result of decades of experience as senior new music editor at Faber Music, where she has worked closely with composers like Jonathan Harvey, Oliver Knussen, Colin Matthews, and Thomas Ades, and what she has to say in *Behind Bars* transcends the book's first appearance as a manual of notational best practice. Under the surface of its guide to producing the best and clearest scores - the arcana of making sure you're not asking your harpist for too many pedal changes, that you change clefs in the right place in your orchestral parts, and how best to indicate the plethora of extended instrumental techniques in so much contemporary music - this book expounds an alchemical formula for musical communication. Gould's book shows composers how to ensure that the magical transfer of musical ideas from their imaginations to their scores, from their performers to their audiences, is as seamless as possible. *Behind Bars* is a practical revelation of the poetics of musical communication. It's especially necessary in the early 21st century. You might think that after centuries of evermore sophisticated copying, printing, and digitising of music notation that all the problems had been solved. Not a bit of it. The rash of computer scores produced with programmes like Sibelius in the last couple of decades are a mixed blessing. Software like Sibelius allows composers to create full scores and individual parts for the musicians at the click of a button, yet it's too easy to overlook the kind of problems that Gould talks about - where a badly placed page-turn in your string parts can mean the difference between a good performance and a catastrophic one. Gould quotes Mahler's frustration with the copyist who mauled the material of his Eighth Symphony before its first performance in Munich in 1910; looking at his exemplary manuscript of the Fifth Symphony that the Morgan Library has just made available for free online, you can see that Mahler abided by Gould's principles of clarity and consistency. But I wonder what Gould would say to Beethoven, if she were faced with pages like this, from the manuscript of the Ninth Symphony, whose facsimile was recently published by Barenreiter? It's not just a contemporary phenomenon: composers have always pushed at the limits of musical and

notational comprehensibility. The Guardian (Tom Service), 12 January 2011 'Say "musical composition" and you identify a process: but "a musical composition" is very much a product, a commodity: and never more so than when it takes the form of materials from which performers sing or play, and academics build their theories about music history and aesthetics. Philosophers might continue to agonise about the extent to which a printed score represents the composition. Performers are much more likely to agonise about whether the materials put before them make sense and, if you ask professional musicians where they would like to see composers whose materials create tough challenges for them, "behind bars" would be one of the politer suggestions forthcoming. Composers best able to avoid the lash of performers' hostility are those lucky enough to work with a well-established publishing operation, and that means an editor like Faber Music's Elaine Gould. After more than 20 years in the business, Gould has seen (and heard) it all and *Behind Bars* is an encyclopedic distillation of practical professional wisdom, fully justifying its bold subtitle, "The Definitive Guide to Music Notation". Not even Gould can teach you how to compose a good work, of course: but her book is a matchless source of practical advice, all geared to the wryly understated observation that "players will tend to be well disposed towards a work whose instrumental parts are carefully prepared". The book has three main parts: "General Conventions" discusses the notational basics of pitch and rhythm, "Idiomatic Notation" has a section for each of the instrumental families, with harp and classical guitar treated separately, and one for voices: finally "Layout and Presentation" deals not only with the creation of a conventional score, but with issues in electro-acoustic and computer music that bring the story bang up to date. The copious illustration in music type (Richard Emsley was the indefatigable typesetter) show how not to do things as well as how best to do them, and although Gould makes occasional use of extracts from such composers as Elliott Carter and Jonathan Harvey, the bulk of the illustrations - which it has to be said, vary considerably in their relation to "real" music - are (presumably) of her own "composition", with help from those members of the Faber Music family mentioned in her Acknowledgements. Gould's text inevitably reflects the piecemeal manner in which music notation has evolved, with its (for outsiders) crazy mixture of instruction in French, Italian, and other languages, but offering a salutary demonstration of cultural pluralism in action, and all in the service of what is still sometimes hailed as the "universal language" of music. Perhaps that should be Western music, since other music's seem not to need guides such as this. Notation can never be so rigidly "definitive" that it leaves absolutely nothing to the imagination of interpreters: but Gould's guide is as good a source as you can get for how to ensure that your score and parts are approached in a positive spirit by those contracted to realize them as living sound.' Gramophone Magazine (Arnold Whittall), February

2011"

Elaine Gould has been Senior New Music Editor at Faber Music since 1987, in which capacity she has edited the complex and varied scores of such composers as Oliver Knussen, Jonathan Harvey, George Benjamin, Colin Matthews and Thomas Ades. Before this she was a free-lance copyist, specialising in copying contemporary music for several leading British music publishers. She is among the most highly respected music editors currently working in the field.

I recommend this book to any one who wants to know anything and just about everything about the rules of music notation. This book is completely thorough on this subject. I bought it since it had a positive review by Sir Simon Rattle who recently stepped down as the conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. If someone with that type of music knowledge expertise has remarks like that, surely his opinion carries a lot of weight in my book. I am an arranger/composer for a wide variety of styles and I use the Finale software for my publishing. However, like the author in this book states: "I hope that a through understanding of the principles set out in this book will complement - indeed complete - the armoury of skills, short-cuts and techniques that the modern musician sitting at a computer has to hand." (--Introduction page xi). With that being said, I must say that NO music software can replace the human element. I personally am a perfectionist as to how the sheet music comes out of my printer. Matter of fact, I was one of those who used blank music sheets and ink to write down music not so long ago. My music school covered in a general way some of the notational aspects of this book. Some of these aspects needed to be refreshed in my mind; hence the functionality of this book. For instance, what length should the stems in a group of notes or a single note be? What determines the angle of the beams in a group of notes? No matter how much tweaking I constantly do in Finale, I still have to manually correct a big portion of the music within that software. Nowadays, many music schools do not even cover notational aspects like the ones found in this book and people tend to believe that any musical notational software will print out the perfect printed job. Do not get me wrong, using a notational software does aid in helping you publish music (I would not want to go back to using blank sheets of music and ink!) but as the author brilliantly mentions in her book's introduction: your acquired notational knowledge will complement your software skills and make you sheet music look awesome! Written music like any other written form of communication should be clear. Therefore, in the case of printed music, musicians should be able to focus on playing the music presented to them rather than having to do any guess work as to what could possibly be the arranger or composer's intention. With all of this being said, I strongly

recommend this book!

I am a composer and arranger working mainly with works for American concert band. The guidance provided by "Behind Bars" supersedes and supplements all others guides that I own. Completely up to date with the best information, I cannot find anything missing or to fault it. This should be in the library of any composer in any genre. It will keep you from falling into the musical notation prison... where everything happens... behind bars. Cheers!

This huge (650-page) volume is a must addition to the library of anyone who is seriously involved in writing or editing published music. It covers virtually every conceivable notational dilemma, including writing for specific instrument groups, and the proper layout of scores. The author has decades of experience and it shows, but she is not pedantic and has a sense of humor (as the title might indicate). The book is loaded with musical examples as well as descriptive text. If you are not a music professional, do NOT spend 100 dollars on this book. There are plenty of simple volumes that will give you the basics of notation for most purposes. But as an editor for a music publisher, I consider it well worth the money and will keep it close to my desk along with my dictionary and orchestration manuals!

Awesome resources and very well indexed, My only complaint is after owning for a short time (under 2 months ) the binding is already showing signs of breaking which will be very upsetting considering the cost of this book . Maybe 2nd edition make into 2 volumes so that it isn't ruined with a little use .Or perhaps spiral bound so that its a useable resource book, without the worry that actual reading and use quickly breaks the binding .Other wise a lifesaver , very well written and covers almost every topic . Joy Bravin

In the past, I had been dreaming of such an encyclopedic book about notation like this. Now I found it!!! Its highly systematic arrangement of notating illustration almost solve all my problems when I don't know how to express my thoughts on staves. Sincerely speaking, your shelf must be stacked on a book like this if you are a professional composer or just an amateurish songwriter because the process of notating on your own, not by notation software, will definitely make you ponder your work more profoundly.

Awesome book. I used it to help my friend get ready for publication. I had to consult it to make sure

we were notating things correctly. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to make sure their music is easy to read. It's a pricey book, but the information is valuable to a music copyist or engraver. If you use Finale or Sibelius to compose music, you owe it to the performers that are going to perform your music to buy this book, read through it and make sure that everything is just right. Thanks Elaine!

A very detailed manual for those seriously involved in preparing professional-level print music notation in today's digital world. (Some might call it "engraving," though the term applies to former pre-digital techniques and skills.) Ms. Gould has worked as a senior music editor at Faber Music Ltd, a major UK publisher, since 1987, and has developed the daunting techniques that much contemporary classical music scores require. It is NOT a software manual, but stresses the look and results that software must produce for beautiful scores that are universally readable and understood. Definitely for someone aspiring to these results, and willing to commit to a demanding learning curve, or for current engravers desiring to improve details of their work.

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